

Message Text

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15

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4900

INFO AMCONSUL SYDNEY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0559

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AS, PINT

SUBJ: JUNI MOROSI CASE AGAIN EMERGES INTO HEADLINES

REF: CANBERRA 7955

1. AUSTRALIAN PRESS JAN 24 CONTAINS CONSIDERABLE DETAIL OF NEW SCANDAL INVOLVING JUNI MOROSI, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER CAIRNS, WHOSE APPOINTMENT TO THAT POSITION LAST DECEMBER BRIEFLY TITILLATED AUSTRALIAN MEDIA (REFTEL). PRESS STORIES NOTE THAT CURRENT PHASE OF SCANDAL BEGINS WITH ALLEGED BREAK-IN AT MISS MOROSI'S FLAT IN SYDNEY JAN 17, WHEN VANITY CASE AND TELEPHONE INDEX ALLEGEDLY STOLEN. STORIES ALLEGE, IN CIRCUMSPECT FASHION REQUIRED BY TOUGH AUSTRALIAN LIBEL LAWS, THAT BREAK-IN WAS CONDUCTED BY POLITICAL GROUP WITH LINKS TO SENIOR MEMBERS OF LIBERAL PARTY, WITH W.C. WENTWORTH (MHR FOR MACKELLAR, SYDNEY METROPOLITAN AREA) AND SENATOR IVOR GREENWOOD (VICTORIA) MENTIONED IN THIS CONNECTION. BOTH DENIED ON TV ANY INVOLVEMENT IN ALLEGED BREAK-IN.

2. IN BACKGROUND OF WHOLE AFFAIR IS FRESH SERIES OF SO FAR UNPUBLISHED RUMORS, WHOSE VALIDITY IS IMPOSSIBLE TO VERIFY, THAT MISS MOROSI HAS BEEN ROMANTICALLY INVOLVED WITH NUMBER
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OF SENIOR LABOR MINISTERS AND, PERHAPS, ONE OR MORE LEAD-

ING LIBERALS AS WELL.

3. COMMENT: THERE IS NO U.S. INTEREST INVOLVED IN THE CASE, BUT MOROSI AFFAIR COULD ULTIMATELY BE DETONATOR OF WIDER POLITICAL CRISIS, AS GAIR AFFAIR WAS IN APRIL, 1974, LEADING TO NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN MAY.

4. IRONIC THAT ON JAN 23 RICHARD SALLANT, PRESIDENT OF CBS NEWS, SAID AT NEWS CONFERENCE IN SYDNEY THAT WATERGATE-TYPE AFFAIR COULD NOT BE COVERED BY AUSTRALIAN PRESS IN VIEW OF RESTRICTIVE LIBEL LAWS. ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE SENIOR LIBERAL POLITICIANS PROBABLY ENSURES THAT NEW STAGE OF MOROSI AFFAIR WILL BE AIRED IN PARLIAMENT, WHERE DEFAMATION LAWS DO NOT RPT NOT APPLY. MOREOVER, PRESS WILL SUBSEQUENTLY BE FREE TO QUOT STATEMENTS MADE IN PARLIAMENT AND CANNOT BE PROSECUTED FOR PUBLICATION OF SUCH STATEMENTS. PARLIAMENT RESUMES SESSION FEB 11, AND WILL CONTINUE TO SIT, WITH OCCASIONAL RECESSES, UNTIL EARLY JUNE. THERE IS AMPLE TIME TO AIR MOROSI QUESTION AT SOME LENGTH AND EVERY LIKELIHOOD THAT THIS IS WHAT WILL HAPPEN.

5. I AM CAUTIONING ALL MEMBERS OF MISSION SCRUPULOUSLY TO AVOID SPECULATION OR COMMENT ABOUT THIS STRICTLY AUSTRALIAN SCANDAL. GREEN

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